REMARKS

The Examiner is thanked for the careful examination of the application.

In view of the Examiner's interpretation of the transverse end edge, the claims have been amended to clarify the location of the fluid barrier. The transverse end edges are now defined as the end edges that extend along the transverse direction of the absorbent article. And, the fluid barrier is arranged at or in close proximity to one of the transverse end edges of the fluid receiving layer.

Claims 1 – 8 and 10 – 16 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over USP 6,123,692, hereinafter Guidotti.

Claim 1 defines an absorbent article having an absorbent core including at least one fluid storage layer, at least one fluid distribution layer, and a fluid receiving layer being arranged in at least the crotch area of the article in direct or indirect fluid contact with the fluid distribution layer and the fluid storage layer. The article further includes at least one fluid barrier arranged to extend in the transverse direction of the absorbent article, wherein the fluid barrier is arranged at or in close proximity to one transverse end edge of the fluid receiving layer, the one transverse end edge being located in or adjacent the crotch portion of the article, said fluid barrier extending at least a substantial part of the thickness of said fluid receiving layer.

In contrast to claim 1, Guidotti discloses a product having an acquisition layer, wherein a liquid barrier 21 is inserted in a *center* section of the acquisition layer. See Figs. 3 – 5 of Guidotti and column 4, lines 32 – 37 ("between the front and rear parts"). The barrier 21 in Guidotti is intended to prevent liquid leaking to the rear part 18b of the receiving layer should the front part 18a be temporarily saturated.

The barrier layer of the present invention is in a different location than the Guidotti barrier. The Guidotti barrier layer is inserted into a central section of a layer. Since claim 1 defines the barrier layer as being at a transverse end edge of a layer, Guidotti does not teach or suggest the present invention. The Examiner had taken the position that the transverse edges of Guidotti were the edges that extend in the longitudinal direction of the absorbent article. However, the foregoing amendments to the claim should prevent such an interpretation.

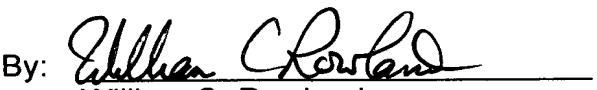
And, the barrier layer of the present invention serves a different purpose than the Guidotti barrier. As stated in paragraph [0063] of the present application, one purpose of the fluid barrier is to *encourage* liquid to move from one portion to the other portion. In the example discussed in paragraph [0063], the fluid is encouraged to move from the front portion to the rear portion, although the invention is not limited to that particular embodiment. The barrier 21 in Guidotti is intended to prevent liquid leaking to the rear part 18b of the receiving layer should the front part 18a be temporarily saturated.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections of claims 1 – 8 and 10 – 16. The Examiner is also requested to consider and allow nonelected claim 9. New claim 17 is allowable at least for the reasons set forth above with respect to claim 1.

In the event that there are any questions concerning this amendment, or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned so that prosecution may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,

BUCHANAN INGERSOLL & ROONEY PC

Date: September 20, 2006 By: 
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